

To the Port Washington Community:

After careful deliberation, we, the Board of Trustees of the Port Washington Public Library, want to inform our community that, given the current circumstances relating to COVID-19, we will not be conducting a public vote on the Library's 2020-2021 budget.

This decision, which is consistent with applicable New York State law, is driven by several factors. First and foremost, the Board has concluded that the budget it originally proposed for community consideration, which provided for a 1% tax levy increase, is no longer in the best interests of our community, given that many people are struggling financially and the Library's expenses have been lower than anticipated as a result of the building being closed for an extended period of time. Second, a mail-in absentee ballot election of the type mandated by New York State would come with a considerable cost, which would be borne by taxpayers. Third, conducting the election would expose our Library staff to unnecessary risk, as it would require their physical presence in the Library building to send out blank ballots as well as to receive and count returns. Finally, executing the process required by law to draw up and formally propose a revised budget to be considered in a state-mandated election on June 9 cannot practicably be achieved in the existing timeframe.

New York State law provides that a library such as ours has the option to roll its current budget forward one year without a vote by the community. Taking everything into consideration, the Board has decided to avail ourselves of this option and will roll the current budget forward for the 2020-2021 fiscal year with no increase in the tax levy.

There is one Board seat that is coming open at the end of June, as one trustee's term is ending. Voting for that position was originally scheduled to accompany the Library budget vote on April 7. The Port Washington School District has graciously agreed to include the voting for this open Board seat as part of the state-mandated, mail-in absentee ballot election it is conducting on June 9.

During this difficult time, we want to remind you that, although our building is closed, our Library remains open. Please visit our website at pwpl.org, where you can access countless free online resources, live and recorded events for adults and children, our amazing local history collection, and many, many other fun, interesting, and educational opportunities.

We look forward to seeing you all in our beautiful Library once this crisis passes, as it will. Until then, please stay safe.

Kind Regards,

Board of Trustees
Port Washington Public Library